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The Door Through the Barrier

WHAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY MEANS TO THE MOUNTAIN CHILDREN OF CUMBERLAND GAP

By Rev. John S. Allen, D.D.



The foreman of a lumbering gang who is a student among boys of fourteen



N the historic South Room of the White House two men were in earnest conference one evening during the crisis of the Civil War. One was tall and gaunt and in plain black, and on his kindly, homely rugged face was the light of a simple, direct, and earnest enthusiasm. The other was a much younger man, and

though only in his early thirties, on the shoulders of his blue uniform were the stars of a major-general and his right sleeve hung empty at his side. He had lost that arm at Fair Oaks, and the young general's name was one much in the mouths of men those days—General Oliver Otis Howard. Need it be said who was the other? Are not the few lines I have drawn in words the rough image of a personality so familiar and so dear that in this, the centennial year of his birth, every man, woman, and child who reads this will recognize him instantly?

Before them hung a map which the President had drawn down from the rolls on the wall. It showed the Appalachian mountain region of the South, setting forth the manner in which the five States of Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and the two Virginias joined in the heart of the mountainous region, comprising a large tract of territory there, so thick with natural obstacles that the builders of beaten tracks, north and south and east and west, had gone around it rather than through it.

The westward-sweeping progress of the empire, following close on the heels of the pioneers, had overleaped it and left it peopled with a large body of the descendants of the pioneers—the very finest and fittest of Anglo-Saxon stock, but naturally isolated, and even then long since out of step with the remainder of the nation. At that time they were literally hemmed in on every side by Confederate forces.

Lincoln was speaking earnestly of them. His own parents and their parents were of the stock of those mountain people. He knew their love of freedom, their often-demonstrated loyalty and bravery in defence of the Union, and he was planning not only to reunite them with the loyal body politic of the north, but he wanted them to have books, schools, railroads—in fact, the opportunities to prove themselves the good citizens and valuable assets of the nation that he knew them to be. He went into his plan at length and asked the young general to head an army to sweep away the Confederate wall around them.

"General," he said, solemnly, as they parted, "they are loyal—there they are loyal, loyal!"

The younger man departed, Lincoln's own map, with Lincoln's characteristic markings on it under his arm. In due course of time the barriers of men were swept away, but the natural barrier still existed; and just when he saw the time at hand to begin to break it down the hand of death stayed the hand of Lincoln.

The patriotic and devoted white people of the Southern mountains thus lost the best friend they had ever had, but fortunately his plans still lived in the minds of others.

The young general whom he inspired went his way, serving his country gloriously in war and in peace, and either established or helped to establish some seventy colleges and schools, many of them in that very region. He was weighted meanwhile with great official burdens, but he never forgot the obligation upon him of rending that barrier.

More than forty years had gone by. One great company that for gain had established a centre of artificial progressive life near Cumberland Gap, the great natural gateway through the heart of the mountains, had failed and passed into oblivion. On the broad veranda of one of the buildings of the neighboring village close by a handsome estate four men and one odd woman* sat in the moonlight. One was Dr. Meyers, the head of Harrow School for the mountaineer children, which had been getting help from guests at the buildings from which the Northern boomers had now decamped. Of those who had gone into the Appalachians to make money through the hands and labor of the mountain people, none remained to give them an uplifting hand

* The group was Dr. and Mrs. Meyers, Hon. D. R. James, of New York; and Rev. Fred B. Avery, of Painsville, Ohio.

after the chances of making money were gone. This dramatic period John Fox has depicted in *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*. Another man of the group was General Howard, now moving on the fourscore years mark, but, though white of hair and beard, as erect, hale, and hearty as ever. He was thinking hard as he walked back and forth past the group and talked; he was striving to make sure that in the opportunity that lay before him was the truly great chance to fulfil his moral obligation to Abraham Lincoln in behalf of the people of those mountains. Had the time come for creating a great "light in the hills," a flaming torch of learning to dispel the gloom of ignorance, and doing it in the name of Lincoln? Could he and his coadjutors begin to build up a permanent, living, growing self-renewing memorial to Lincoln, something not of marble or bronze to please the eye and stir the heart, but a real something in the lives and deeds of thousands of Lincoln's own kindred people who in successive generations should make his name even more glorious? When they had finished their council



The chemical laboratory was constructed by the students from timber cut on the grounds

the old soldier, statesman, and poorman philanthropist had made up his mind. That night the little Harrow School built on the wreck, and from the fragments of a bursted bubble became "Lincoln Memorial University."

This brings my narrative to the wonderful moving events of to-day, when, the university having been proved to be a true door through the barrier that Lincoln saw and knew, though it has been opened but a little way, the foremost patriotic citizens of the country organized as the "Lincoln University Endowment Association" of New York City, have joined hands and are inviting the American people to help them fling wide the portal, that all who will may pass through.

If the university had been opened with a stated matricula-

tion fee of the sort usual in other colleges, it would have closed soon again. The two hundred dollars that is an average minimum elsewhere would have frightened the region beyond expression, so desperate was the poverty of the people. Through genuine sympathy with them and an understanding of their needs, it was arranged that they might matriculate with either cash or produce and then work their way through by labor of various sorts on the lands of the school. The first taught were paid to return into the remote mountain gulches and teach the younger. So the result. The school soon filled to its utmost capacity of about seven hundred. Girls came with the family cows, and the joint efforts of girl and cow in the dairy paid all the bills of a normal or college course. Boys came with live-stock loaded down with farm products and would leave the plough to go to the class-room and then back to the plough till night-fall, and when the people of those deep gulches saw their changed offspring come home, returning from the portal of the outside world with knowledge and progress, a great and insatiable hunger for knowledge arose and spread among them, old and young. Many times over could this school have been filled. With renewed patience, courage, and prayerfulness the great-hearted old warrior who was mainly responsible for the knowledge-hunger took up the gigantic task of raising the million dollars necessary to equip the school to the point when it could appease that laudable and pathetic desire.

The rumor sped far and near through the mountains that the wonder was to be wrought, that all girls and boys were to have a chance, and the excitement became that of a land rush, till on this very day in early September when I write these lines actual thousands of students are clamoring for admission to a school that even as yet cannot take more than when the school year closed last spring. The men who are seeking the endowment are now asking for the money from the public in small amounts with which to provide the material for the students under the foremanship of those trained previously in the industrial classes to build two large barracks, one for the boys, the other for the girls, to house this embarrassing influx.

Of what a very good sort those youngsters reared in jeans and calico, in log shanties on the mountains, must be when they will make such efforts to secure an education! One would think, from their precipitancy, they were flying to luxury, ease, and high pay of some sort, yet the following pathetic extracts from the handbook of the school, printed by the students themselves, show far better than could any word picture that in the vernacular "tending school at Lincoln is no popcorn picnic."

"By careful economy—the tuition is free—no student pays anything for instructions, but (to meet the expenses of rent, heat, library repairs, etc.) students do, however, pay a small incidental fee of five and six dollars per term.

"These rooms are lighted and heated and furnished with a chair, bedsteads, springs, mattresses, wardrobe, and the larger ones with washstand and dresser. Other furnishings must be brought or provided by the students. Every student should come provided with two sheets, two pillow-cases, two covers, towels, a pillow, napkins, overshoes, and an umbrella.

"Board in Avery Hall costs the young ladies about



From such homes in the Cumberland Mountains come the students who attend the Lincoln Memorial University



Avery Hall was built by the students under the direction of the head of the Industrial Department as architect



These are some of the cottages which have been erected by the students in order to pay their room-rent

\$6.50 per month. Board in Grant-Lee Hall costs the young men about \$7.50 per month. The food is of good quality, well cooked, and abundant, but without luxuries."

And below those lines are other provisions for those too straitened to enjoy the *haute-monde* life at twenty-two cents a day in Avery or Grant-Lee.

"For those who wish different accommodations, a third boarding-hall is conducted on the university grounds.

"All students who wish to pay a good part of their expenses in manual labor must come prepared to pay in cash or in produce one term's incidentals, three months' room rent, and one month's board. After this payment, the students who are industrious and willing to work may be able to pay all further school expenses by labor."

When General Howard and his associates opened headquarters in New York and began this propaganda, keeping in mind the fact that this is to be the American people's memorial to Lincoln, they did not seek out a few philanthropic millionaires, who, if they chose, could easily give the whole money, but they turned their appeal to the whole people; and if any man doubts that Abraham Lincoln is loved and venerated in this country and that the American people are devoid of sympathy with boys and girls willing to work for an education, if they have a chance, he should scan the hourly mail on the desk of the treasurer, Alexander S. Webb, Jr., President of the Lincoln Trust Company. Old soldiers and soldiers' widows send bits out of their pension money; farmers who "get their schoolin'" between corn-shucking time and the first spring ploughing-day send their dollar bills and small postal orders; country school-teachers remit the few dollars the children have raised; the mayor of a country town remits his stiffly inscribed check for ten dollars; the up-State lawyer sends a small New York draft; an old sailor in Snug Harbor Home,

who was with Farragut, somehow got twenty dollars which he wants given to some specific boy or girl if that boy or girl will write to him and make him feel that there is some one alive in whom he has an interest, and so on runs the list.

The character of the able and patriotic movement is well shown when it is said that to the support of General Howard as president, the President and Vice-President of the country, William Howard Taft and James S. Sherman, stand as vice-presidents, and among the eminent men who have come forward with money, work, and influence are Col. Theodore Roosevelt; Gov. Charles E. Hughes; Hon. Elihu Root, diplomat and jurist; Hon. Joseph H. Choate, diplomat; Gen. Thomas H. Hubbard, financier; Col. George Harvey, editor and publicist; Gen. Benjamin F. Tracy, statesman; Mr. Isaac N. Seligman, capitalist and philanthropist; Mr. Henry Clews, sage of Wall Street; Hon. Robert L. Taylor, the beloved Governor-Senator; Hon. George B. Cortelyou, ex-Cabinet member; Hon. Alton B. Parker, jurist and statesman; Hon. Henry Watterson, famous editor and politician; Gen. Daniel E. Sickles, philanthropist and soldier; Gen. Leonard Wood, Commander Department of the East; Gen. Roger A. Pryor, capitalist and publicist; Hon. Philander C. Knox, Secretary of State; Hon. Truman H. Newberry, ex-Cabinet member; Hon. Robert Bacon, diplomat; Mr. William G. McAdoo, a man of great deeds; Mr. George R. Sheldon, banker and philanthropist; Hon. George W. Wickersham, United States Attorney-General; Hon. James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture; Hon. John D. Long, father of the new navy; Hon. Jacob M. Dickinson, Secretary of the War Department; Hon. Frank H. Hitchcock, Secretary of the Post-Office Department; Hon. Frank O. Lowden, capitalist; Com. A. V. Wadhams, United States Navy (Retired); Mr. Hugh Gordon Miller, capitalist and lawyer; Mr. William Shillaber, capitalist; Hon. Claude A. Swanson, Governor of Virginia; Hon. John W. Tomlinson, lawyer

and publicist; Mr. Darwin P. Kingsley, President of the New York Life; Mr. Charles H. Young, lawyer; Mr. Robert C. Kammerer, head of the Æolian Company; Mr. G. H. Middlebrook, capitalist and philanthropist; Hon. Theodore P. Gilman, ex-State Comptroller; Hon. John Barrett, head of Bureau of South-American Republics; Mr. W. C. Brown, President of the New York Central; Hon. Walter P. Brownlow, Congressman; Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor of the *Outlook*; Cornelius N. Bliss, statesman, capitalist, and philanthropist; Gen. Frederick Dent Grant, soldier and department commander; Rabbi Leonard J. Levy, D.D.; Hon. Seth Low, publicist; John Mitchell, labor leader; Henry Cabot Lodge, capitalist and statesman; Augustus E. Willson, Governor of Kentucky; and many others.

In a brief time there is certain to rise in Cumberland Gap a university that will be among the foremost in the country. A large percentage of the student body of almost every other large educational institution is made up of boys and girls to whom an educational veneer is being applied as a matter of course. Their parents or guardians send them through with the reasonable hope that their money will produce some results in the form of more or less culture and polish. Students of this class, when placed side by side with others who are working their way through, and to whom going through college is something of a deadly earnest nature, invariably appear to disadvantage. It is the struggling man who shines in colleges, as a rule. What great things must be expected then from Lincoln Memorial University, where every man and woman, boy and girl, is fighting to keep each foothold gained and to whom the books, lectures, classes, etc., are things as serious as life itself! Frankly, I believe more men and women of power and possibilities will issue from Lincoln Memorial in the next ten years than from any other university in the country.

A Primitive Golfing Scene

THE original of this winter scene in Holland hangs in the Ryks Museum at Amsterdam, and was painted by Van der Meer (b. 1632). Many Dutch tiles and pictures have been discovered indicating that a sport suggesting golf was anciently in

lake, and the player is evidently preparing to drive the teed ball *away* from the ice and possibly in the direction of a true golf hole. His opponent is watching the stroke, but there is no suggestion in his attitude of the antagonism of the hockey-player. More-

to warm his half-frozen fingers. As for the players on the ice, it is perfectly evident that the golfer addressing his ball is about to approach to the putting-green, entirely regardless of the fact that the previous couple have not as yet holed out and moved away.



vogue in the Low Countries, but the objection has been raised that since the game was always represented as being played on the ice it must have been a variant of hockey and not true golf.

This picture is unique in that the principal figures in the foreground are standing upon the shore of the

lake, and the player is evidently preparing to drive the teed ball away from the ice and possibly in the direction of a true golf hole. His opponent is watching the stroke, but there is no suggestion in his attitude of the antagonism of the hockey-player. More-

Such violation of etiquette is not unknown, even in this enlightened age, and goes far to prove that it is a real golfing scene that Mynter van der Meer has depicted. Golf is the one game that boasts an elaborate code of etiquette, and yet bad manners appear to be perennial.